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MARCH OF CO. A, ENGINEERS FROM FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS, ...

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NUMBER 48
OCCASIONAL PAPERS
ENGINEER SCHOOL
UNITED STATES ARMY

Narrative of the March of Co. A, Engineers from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to Fort Bridger, Utah, and Return

MAY 6 TO OCTOBER 3, 1858

A Contribution to the History of the United States Corps of Engineers

By

WILLIAM P. SEVILLE
Artificer in the Company during the March
Captain, First Delaware Volunteer Infantry
in the Civil War

Revised under the Direction of the
Commandant Engineer School, United States Army

By

First Lieut. JOHN W. N. SCHULZ
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WASHINGTON BARRACKS, D. C.
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Introductory Note

By GILBERT THOMPSON

In the spring of 1858, when the Government met with opposition from the Mormon community, in relation to the appointment of Mr. Cummings as Governor of the Territory, and Brigham Young's corps of Danites was being recruited and drilled for active service, it was decided that a military force should be sent to the seat of the trouble to maintain the National authority. The expedition numbered several thousand men—cavalry, artillery, and infantry.

As the grass along what was known as the "Emigrant Route" had been almost entirely consumed by the numerous mule and ox-trains which had passed over the Plains during the preceding year, it was found necessary to make a new road, from the Platte River to the Green, over which the Army could march.

To perform this duty with sufficient speed to avoid delaying the advancing columns, sixty-four selected men, under First Lieut. James C. Duane and Second Lieut. Edward P. Alexander, were taken from Company A, United States Engineers, then stationed at the Military Academy at West Point, N. Y. Leaving a detachment at West Point, the Company started on this service March 31st, 1858, going by rail and steamboat as far as Fort Leavenworth, Kans. Here it remained in barracks until fully equipped to encounter the vicissitudes of the Western Plains. The march to Utah, proper, was begun the 6th of May, 1858.

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Narrative of the March

May 6 (Thursday). With bright anticipations of beholding many a novel and interesting scene, and with high expectations of enjoying the new and eventful life which was about to open before us, we left Fort Leavenworth behind on the 6th day of May, 1858. Before us lay a long march—twelve hundred miles, we were told—across a wild, and, except for the first two hundred miles, a desert and uninhabited country.

Eight wagons, each drawn by six sturdy mules, drove up in front of our quarters, and, after receiving their baggage, started for the first camping ground at Salt Creek, a distance of about four miles. The wagons were accompanied by a detachment to serve as escort and to pitch the tents.

The remainder of the Company followed an hour or two later, in heavy marching order. Except for the observance of discipline, and the order of our marching, no one would have supposed us to be an organized portion of the United States Army. We each wore a white felt hat and a gray or blue woolen blouse, or hunting shirt. There were belt, bayonet, haversack, canteen, pistol, a large clasp knife—all surmounted by knapsack and rifle. To we Eastern soldiers this tout ensemble seemed ludicrous enough.

We pitched our first camp, manifesting considerable delicacy about taking our meals *al fresco*, and being very particular to select the driest and softest spots on which to make our beds.

May 7 (Friday). Reveille was at an early hour. We stowed our cumbrous knapsacks with the rest of the baggage in the wagons, and then set out on our march with lighter bodies and gayer hearts. The day's journey was only sixteen miles, but the roads were in poor condition from the breaking up of winter, and to us, unaccustomed to continuous marching, it seemed an endless distance. Several times during the day we were obliged to turn ourselves into mules, and assist in pulling the wagons out of mud holes. The night's camp was at Oak Grove.

May 8 (Saturday). The next day we went as far as Ravine

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Spring, six miles. We made but a short march, owing to the miserable condition of the roads.

May 9 (Sunday). On the 9th, although Sunday, we made a long march, as we expected to overtake our provision train, which was some distance in advance of us. We failed in the undertaking, however, although marching twenty-one miles.

Where we were encamped, that night, on the Second Branch of Grasshopper Creek, we could distinctly hear the hungry howl of the prairie wolf, a new and amusing music to us.

May 10 (Monday). The first day of the new week, Monday, the 10th, we trudged our weary way over twelve and three-quarter miles of muddy, dreary, rolling prairie, and encamped on Walnut Creek. Here we discovered the commissary train (of which we have been in search), consisting of about a hundred and forty wagons.

May 11 (Tuesday). Tuesday, the 11th, we remained at Walnut Creek, in order to better the crossing of the creek and to consolidate the whole command. Four companies of the Sixth Infantry (Companies G, A, D, and K) came up in the morning, and the men looked on while we cut away the banks of the stream and prepared brush to throw into the soft places. In the afternoon, all crossed the creek and camped together on the far side.

May 12 (Wednesday). We marched sixteen miles, camping four miles beyond Oak Point. This was the first day the whole command marched together, and it was plainly evident that the crack marching regiment was making strong efforts to fill our sick list by fast marching. We attributed the attempt to outmarch us to their ignorance of the spirit and personnel that made up Co. A, Engineers.

May 13 (Thursday). We went six miles beyond the Fourth Branch of Grasshopper Creek, a distance of fifteen miles. We had tattoo a little after sunset, in order to allow a long rest to those who wished it.

May 14 (Friday). We reached Vermilion Creek, after a very disagreeable march of twenty-one miles. The air was raw and cold, and most of the day a cold wind blew directly in our faces. The roads were deeply cut with ruts, and the grass was filled with water. The Sixth was ahead at the beginning, but we passed them on the march; and although they tried once or twice to regain their position, they failed to do so.

May 15 (Saturday). Another cold day. We marched twenty

miles, to the Big Blue River. Overcoats were worn, and we were glad to keep our hands in our pockets. About 11 a. m. we were treated to a heavy hailstorm, the stones coming rattling about our ears as large as marbles.

There is a ghost of a village here, which the residents have the presumption to call "Palmetto City." It consists of a blacksmith shop, a tavern, two stores, and five or six log houses; and boasts of a weekly paper, just large enough to make a good cigar-lighter. Sugar crackers sell at 35 cents per pound, and whiskey, of doubtful quality, at 75 cents per quart.

May 16 (Sunday). A day of rest for everybody except us. It rained all day. The Infantry lay in their tents and watched the Engineers at work with pick and shovel. We went to the river crossing, and employed the old remedy, brush and digging, to make it passable. After returning to camp we were each treated to a gill of whiskey, which, we were informed, it was a part of our duty to drink. Some of the men brought wood and made a large camp fire, and stood by it to dry themselves in the rain.

May 17 (Monday). The next day we resumed our march, and encamped at Cottonwood Creek, only eleven and three-quarter miles from the Big Blue.

May 18 (Tuesday). We went on to Turkey Creek, twenty-one and three-quarter miles. It was quite a warm day, and several of the men had recourse to the wagons, on account of lameness. Some wolves were seen prowling about during the march. Lieutenant Alexander fired at one or two, but the distance was such, apparently, that the animals were only amused by the whistling of the bullets. Part of the Company repaired the crossing of the creek this evening.

May 19 (Wednesday). The waters of Big Sandy Creek, which we reached the next day, after a march of twenty-one and a half miles, were very limpid, an unusual thing in this country. We nearly all took a wash.

May 20 (Thursday). We encamped at a place called "West Point on Blue River," after a march of nineteen and three-quarter miles. Considerable game was within sight to-day, among which were several antelopes. Attempts were made to capture some, but we only succeeded in bringing a wolf into camp.

May 21 (Friday). We went to the Little Blue River, twenty-one and three-quarter miles. The heat to-day was very great. The perspiration oozed at every pore—and the dust collected on

our faces and in our eyes, filled our noses, and encrusted our lips. Lieutenant Alexander and Sergeant Pierce saw some buffaloes, and went out to shoot one; but, provokingly enough, some mischievous Puck was officious enough to turn them into oxen just in time to disappoint the hunters and to save the lives of the animals.

May 22 (Saturday). We went as far as Little Blue Valley, twenty-one and a third miles. We overtook an ox-train bound for Salt Lake, and a difficulty arose concerning our passing them. The place was such that we could not turn out of the road to pass, and those in charge of the train did not seem inclined to hurry to a point where we could pass. Argument was of no avail, and consequently we came into collision. The battle was to the strong—the quick, furious plunges of the mules proving too much for the sluggish pulling of the oxen. One of our wagons got through, and then, by driving the leaders' noses against the tailboards of the preceding wagons, all our train made its passage through. One of the teamsters of the ox-train gazed with wild astonishment at our harmless forge, and asked at last, "Are you going to take *only one cannon* with you?"

May 23 (Sunday). This turned out to be another day of rest—and, as nothing could be found for us to do, we had our share in it, too.

Last night we were all awakened by the fury of a severe thunder storm. The rain fell in torrents, and a little of it made its way into the tents. The wind blew a perfect tornado. As we expected every minute to be without a roof over our heads, and could do nothing to avert the danger, we did the next best thing—sat down and smoked our pipes. The lightning was blinding, and the flashes followed each other in constant succession. The loud thunder rattled everything movable around us. But the storm was too violent to last, and before our pipes were out we saw the full moon in the sky, and the lunar-bow.

May 24 (Monday). Last night we were favored with act two of the play begun the night before. The wind, hail, and rain raged with a fury not a whit less severe, but again no damage was done.

We marched to the Second Crossing of Elm Creek, seventeen and a third miles. The effect of the storm was to render our marching less comfortable, the roads being very muddy and the grass dripping with water, so that we were soon wet and muddy up to our knees. We came across a couple of emigrants, near the close of our march.

May 25 (Tuesday). This day brought us to the valley of the Platte River, after a march of eighteen miles. The valley is level, and about three miles in width, the river winding along a serpentine course. The river is nearly a quarter of a mile wide, and from two to twelve feet in depth, the current being very swift and powerful.

The day closed with a sad accident. A supernumerary teamster of the commissary train, Thomas B. Smith, of New Jersey, went in bathing, took cramps, and was carried away by a relentless current to a watery grave. Fruitless efforts were made to recover the body.

A grave was seen as we descended into the valley; a lonely record of sanguine expectations and frustrated hopes. A board at the head bore the inscription, "Miss Susan G. Hale, Mormon; Died 1852, Aged 24 years."

Here first commenced the work of gathering buffalo chips for fuel. We engaged in the duty somewhat reluctantly, softening the unpleasantness of it by laughing at each other.

May 26 (Wednesday). We reached the long-looked-for Fort Kearney, marching thirteen and a third miles. Our course lay along the valley, and the Fort was in sight throughout the march. It first consisted only of a chimney and a flag-pole, but every mile added something to it. A large house, we found, was attached to the chimney, and a flag to the pole, and at last the place grew into several extensive buildings, flanked about by adobe houses. Inhabitants: Infantry and washerwomen. Goods for sale: buffalo skins and whiskey. Game: buffaloes and wolves. Products: prairie grass and cacti. Water very poor.

A mail was distributed among us, and the happy recipients sought shady nooks in which to have a chat with some loved one, or perhaps to battle with wind and sand in trying to reply to the epistles received.

May 27 (Thursday). We remained in camp on account of about fifty teamsters of the commissary train striking for higher wages. They were marched away from the camp, bag and baggage, with the guard at their rear at *charge bayonets*. The delay was rather fortunate, however, as it gave an opportunity, both to us and the mules, to recuperate from the wear and tear of the march.

May 28 (Friday). We left Fort Kearney behind, but made only ten and a half miles, none of us being in the long-march humor. The prairie was covered with long, dead grass, and some careless

individual lighted his pipe and the prairie at the same time. We soon succeeded in extinguishing the blaze. But we were not long in camp before we were turned out by the *long roll* to do battle once more with the devouring element; this time our weapons were gunny-bags and blankets, and the fire was soon thoroughly beaten out.

The command was joined before leaving Fort Kearney by Companies F and I of the Sixth Infantry. And we left behind at the Fort one of our own men, Robert Ayres, suffering with inflammatory rheumatism, so that he could have the advantage of good medical attendance and a comfortable hospital.

Somebody made a trade to-day whereby we lost our wall tents and were given bell tents instead. The wall tents were quite comfortable, although too crowded; the bell tents are more roomy, but less comfortable.

May 29 (Saturday). We encamped on the Platte River, having marched twelve miles. Wood is so scarce that a party had to swim across the river for some, floating it back to camp.

May 30 (Sunday). This should have been a day of rest. We congratulated ourselves on our good luck in not having to march, as the day was wet and chilly. But we crowed too early in the morning, for we were all turned out to procure wood, which, as yesterday, had to be floated back from the opposite side of the river, after three hours' work in a swamp, up to the middle in mud and water.

May 31 (Monday). We reached the crossing of Plum Creek, a distance of fifteen miles. At one time during the march we were gladdened by the sight of a large lake, with bluffs and headlands extending into it, and with vessels sailing majestically on its calm bosom; but, sad to relate, on nearer approach the lake turned into a low fog, the headlands dwindled into the old, monotonous chain of sand-bluffs, and the vessels metamorphosed into three or four rusty looking ox-wagons.

June 1 (Tuesday). We encamped in Buffalo Bog, so called because it is a great trail for the buffaloes. Our march amounted to seventeen and a third miles. As we came into camp a herd of buffaloes was seen on the neighboring sand hills. The Lieutenant and the Indian hunters went after them and killed two or three, bringing in the tongues and the humps, and leaving the remainder for the wolves to pick.

We saw our first real Indians to-day. A chief of the Sioux and

his squaw came into camp this afternoon. They were savage all over—in their looks, dress, and conduct; and decidedly so in their speech, which, however, they used very sparingly, talking to us in a sort of dignified pantomime. The gist of the conversation was, "Something to eat," and no matter of what we spoke they invariably began their answer with, "How! How!" and terminated with "Something to eat." It would have been difficult to distinguish the chief from the squaw, they resembled each other so closely in looks and dress, were it not that the squaw never laughed until the chief smiled nor opened her mouth to speak until first spoken to.

June 2 (Wednesday). To-day brought us to Reedy Flat, seventeen and a half miles. Our camp ground is level and swampy, and full of tall reeds—hence its name.

Two men are now detailed each morning to start an hour or two before the command, in order, if possible, to shoot some game; but owing to the inexperience of our men, they rarely succeed in obtaining anything.

June 3 (Thursday). We came to-day to Cottonwood Spring, concluding a march of seventeen and a third miles. After dark the police detail was obliged to turn out on a wood hunting expedition, in order to procure fuel for breakfast. The nearest wood was at least a mile from camp, and in the search for it there was also, incidentally, found some whiskey, which two individuals retailed from a rude tent at the moderate price of one dollar per quart.

June 4 (Friday). We went two or three miles beyond O'Fallons Bluff, nineteen and a half miles altogether. A great variety of flowers decked the prairie, and many of us amused ourselves by making bouquets.

Some three or four days ago Lieutenant Duane gave up pedestrianism and took to riding his horse.

June 5 (Saturday). We marched again to-day over a flowery plain: phlox, wall flowers, bachelor's buttons, larkspur, lilies, cacti, golden dagger, snap-dragons, daisies, and forget-me-nots grew in wild confusion. We covered eighteen and a half miles. The weather was mild and beautiful.

June 6 (Sunday). We did not march to-day, but no rest was vouchsafed us. The company was fallen in at fatigue call and divided into working parties—some roasted coffee, some ground tools, others mended tents, and the remainder forded the river after wood.

June 7 (Monday). We were again en route, and proceeded to North Pond, sixteen and a third miles. Three or four successive dry days have made the road very dusty.

June 8 (Tuesday). We came to within four miles of the "First Crossing," journeying nineteen miles. A Sioux village was in sight, on the opposite side of the river, and we were not long in camp before some thirty of the villagers paid us a visit, headed by an old, bow-legged warrior. They all approached with extended hand, exclaiming, "How! How!"—then wandered about the camp, making observations and taking anything they found loose, and trading with the men. They never failed to be near when anything like provisions was produced, and were not at all backward in telling one they were hungry. We gave some a little soup, which they liked very much, taking especial care, however, to avoid the vegetables which it contained. A party of boys among them amused us by shooting down little ornaments with their arrows, receiving as reward the ornaments which served as targets. They also ran several foot races with our little drummer boy, the honors being divided. The Indians are bold riders, the harness on their horses consisting only of a Mexican bit and a rawhide bridle. They twist their feet inside the horses' forelegs, and the animals might as well try to get rid of their tails as of one of these copper-colored devils.

This evening a party of women came over, with skins and moccasins to trade. Some of the younger ones were comely looking maidens. One old squaw, accompanied by two daughters, made a trade with one of the men, giving a buffalo robe for a double-sized silk handkerchief, blue, with red and yellow flowers. She no sooner spread it to the breeze than both daughters besieged her for it, but she turned and ran with her prize, pursued by the two damsels.

June 9 (Wednesday). We made a march of seventeen and a quarter miles, to the crossing of the South Fork of the Platte River. It was very warm during the morning, and the soles of our shoes became very smooth from marching through the dead grass. At noon, though, it commenced raining, and continued to do so all afternoon and evening. After arriving at our camp ground we had to wait nearly an hour for the train, which through some cause had been detained. We kindled a fire and crowded around it, three or four deep.

The Lieutenant, Dwyer (the wagon-master), and two or three

other men mounted mules last night, took a day's provisions, and started up the river to seek the crossing here. Finding it, they spent the night with the old Cheyenne chief, Spotted Tail, who had two or three wigwams at the crossing. They were entertained in a distinguished manner by his dusky highness, returning in the morning to the command. But as soon as our train came within sight to-day the old Chief pulled up his stakes and "vamoosed the ranch."

June 10 (Thursday). We remained in camp, as it was a raw, wet, chilly day; little was done except to sleep. The Colonel wishes a warm day for the crossing.

June 11 (Friday). The day being no better than yesterday, and there being no prospect of improvement, we commenced the long-dreaded crossing. Lieutenant Alexander divested himself of all clothing, except his shirt and drawers, and entered, leading his horse. We speedily stripped ourselves, carrying our belts and haversacks around our necks, our clothes in a bundle on the ends of our rifles. Every two good swimmers taking between them one of those ignorant of the now useful art, we trusted ourselves to the mercy of the chilling, madly rushing current. The water was high, and as cold as ice. It required as much strength as we could muster to gain a step against the current, and the sharp stones on the bottom cut our feet painfully, till our legs and feet became so benumbed with cold as to be insensible to further pain. As we made a step forward, when the water was but a foot or two deep, we would sink unexpectedly to the middle, and probably the next step would take us in to the arm-pits; then the water would obtain such a force against the body that it required almost superhuman efforts to keep an upright position. We became dizzy from the rapid current before getting half way across, and by the time the opposite shore was reached most of us were pretty well exhausted. One man, Artificer James R. Kelly, was swept off his feet, but luckily enough I was able to catch hold of him and bring him ashore.

Our train, while we were crossing, started off in a stampede, and we had the pleasure of being on one side of the stream and seeing our wagons carried away over hill and valley, in every direction, on the other. Fortunately, the mules were safely brought back, although a little blown; after they were all securely landed on our side of the river they were the meekest and most humble congregation of mules I have ever seen.

After we pitched our tents each received a gill of whiskey. Upon inspection, the losses of the day were found to be one linchpin and one pair of pantaloons.

June 12 (Saturday). We went as far as Rattlesnake Hill, eighteen and an eighth miles. Several rattlesnakes were seen during the march, and once or twice our men came near treading on them, but they escaped us by getting into their holes, or we escaped them by getting out of their way. The rear guard killed one or two.

We left the old road in the morning and took Bryans. After about two hours' march we reached Lodge Pole Creek and forded it, our course then lying through the valley of the creek. There was good grass all through the valley, and myriads of flowers, but no wood. We were obliged to burn buffalo chips.

June 13 (Sunday). We marched to-day, as the Colonel wishes to get to a pine country about a hundred miles ahead. We went nineteen and three-quarter miles, this being the second camp on Lodge Pole Creek.

An order was published prohibiting dogs running at large, either on the march, at a halt, or in camp—hard on the canines, but they find no sympathy. Two other orders were published, one obliging the sick to attend all roll calls—no man has a right to be sick on a campaign!—the other stating that the Company should fall in at reveille *under arms,* so that on days when we do not march our weapons may remain stacked outside, to give the rain a chance to wash them and to allow the sun to better season the stocks.

June 14 (Monday). We marched nineteen miles along Lodge Pole Creek, the valley of which is one of the most beautiful portions of this country, requiring only the presence of trees to make it perfectly charming. Two chains of sand-bluffs skirt the valley, one on either side, and, toward the close of our march these bluffs began to assume a rocky appearance.

A curious and interesting novelty was seen by us to-day, an Indian dead lodge. It was a wigwam, built in the usual manner, the poles covered with buffalo hides, hair side in, and the opening of the lodge sewed shut with rawhide thongs. A pole was planted in the center of the tent and projected through the covering, about eight feet higher than the door; to the pole was suspended the distinguishing badge of the chief buried within, composed of painted eagle feathers, ornamented in a very neat manner with horsehair and beads. The ground around the lodge was ditched, and the sods piled around the bottom of the skins. About ten feet from

the lodge, in front of the door, was a square patch of earth, dug up and carefully smoothed, and behind it a small mound of earth and sods, on top of which were placed two buffalo skulls, bleached white with the rains; they were arranged facing the lodge, as like two silent sentinels watching the repose of the dead, and the forehead of each bore ten red stripes, signifying that the defunct dignitary had borne his share of the perils of ten war-paths.

Although our curiosity was under the reins of respect for the deceased, yet we could not resist the temptation of getting just a peep at the internal arrangements; drawing one or two pegs from the bottom of the skins, we bent our straining vision into the solemn depth of darkness that reigned within. Needless to say, the olfactory nerves were first gratified, but as our eyes became accustomed to the uncertain light we could discern a shapeless mass, elevated upon crotched poles, and lying upon a bed of twigs, closely wrapped in skins. From the poles were suspended the quiver of arrows, the bow, the tomahawk, the pipe, and the ammunition pouches of the deceased. We carefully closed the lodge and left the dead to his solitude.

But, sad to relate, when our train had passed, not only the curiosity of some of the men was excited, but their cupidity also; in less than five minutes the before sacred resting place was, by heartless and relentless hands, left in desolate ruin.

June 15 (Tuesday). We did not march to-day, on account of an express being sent to Fort Laramie, about fifty miles from here, to ascertain if any orders are there for the command, to carry our mail matter, and to procure a guide to pilot us from Bridgers Pass to Fort Bridger. Having found that pine wood is available, a wagon was sent out, with a detail of men, to cut and bring in a load.

The Company was indulged in the luxury of a drill to-day, and notwithstanding the uneven nature of the ground, and the fact of our having been so long on the march, our men went through the movements and maneuvers with remarkable precision.

June 16 (Wednesday). We took up the march and went on a distance of nineteen and a half miles. We encamped again on Pole Creek, which we crossed once on the march. At one point we reached two high, rocky bluffs, covered with pine timber, the road ascending about half way to the top of the bluff on the right of the valley, and forming sort of a ledge along its almost precipitous side. Some large trees grew over the road and threw a shade

across it. On the left of the road was a deep chasm, in which, about sixty feet below, ran the creek, thickly shaded on either side by dense shrubbery. This beautiful spot possessed such charms for us, coming as we did from the bleak, uninteresting prairie, that we stopped to rest, and thought ourselves transported into the regions of fairyland. But our pleasure was short-lived, for this oasis of the wilderness continued for only a half-mile, when the country again relapsed into the monotonous sky and prairie, relieved only by the scanty shrubbery which grew along the creek.

June 17 (Thursday). We are again encamped on Lodge Pole Creek, our day's march amounting to sixteen and three-fifths miles. The valley was somewhat more rolling than usual to-day. We crossed many ravines and hills, and once more crossed the creek. No timber is within sight yet. Antelopes are very numerous here, but so wild that it is almost impossible to kill any.

June 18 (Friday). We marched nineteen and a half miles, and again encamped on Pole Creek. A small party of men were detailed this morning to cut wood and bring it to the side of the road where the wagons could take it up. About the middle of the march we passed two more pine bluffs, one on each side of the valley, and afterwards emerged upon a long, level plain, where we came to a full stop before an ominous looking bog. Two or three wagons tried to cross; but wagons, mules and all settled down into the soft, black mud; the mules to their bodies and the wagons to the axle-trees. As the mules could not pull out, and the men failed in swearing them out, we were obliged to have recourse to what one of our party termed "main strength and stupidity." By the use of a little force two of the old settlers were extricated; the other proved more stubborn in its affection for "mother earth," and as the mules sat down disconsolately in the mud, we had to send ahead for the assistance of two or three more teams. We hitched on all the mules, and ourselves pulled on ropes attached to the wheels—and our labors and perseverance were finally rewarded with success.

When we reached camp we found an old guide named Duval waiting for us. He was sent over from Fort Laramie, and had been waiting a day or two for our appearance. Duval had shot a fine buck antelope, which he presented to us, and evening found us busily engaged around our camp fires, cooking our steaks.

June 19 (Saturday). We marched eighteen and three-quarter miles, passing over a level prairie throughout the march. We

crossed the creek once more—we had the pleasure of crossing it seven times yesterday—and are encamped upon it again, also. As we are now rapidly approaching its source the creek is growing quite shallow, but the water is, if anything, purer and colder. Near the close of the march two or three white clouds were on the horizon, in front and a little to the left of us. All the firmament, except this one spot, was perfectly innocent of anything like a cloud, and the objects themselves kept such a stubbornly immovable position that we began to doubt whether they were clouds after all. As we approached camp they changed their appearance not in the least, except that they grew somewhat larger. When we were encamped a party ascended a bluff nearby and satisfied ourselves that we were actually in sight of the Medicine Bow Mountains. This was a new and grand sight to many of us. On our right, far in the distance, could be descried a long range of mountains, stretching away as far as the eye could see. Compared with the color of the rolling prairie, that fills up the expanse between us and the mountains, they are a dusky black — hence the name, "Black Hills." The appearance is owing to the density of the pine timber with which the hills are covered.

Our men shot two antelopes, of which achievement we were all very proud.

June 20 (Sunday). We are now nearly six hundred miles from Fort Leavenworth. The day was spent in domestic occupations. Groups might be seen sitting in the shade of the wagons, the only objects which here afford a shade, engaged in mending the breaches in their breeches and other clothes. Others were busied in the laundry department. Others, again, were deep in the mazes of correspondence.

A most magnificent sunset was seen by us this evening. The God of Day was retiring from our vision, majestically robing himself in the dark, threatening thunder-clouds which were rapidly spreading over the heavens. The storm soon interposed its black curtain between us and the grand spectacle, and darkness reigned where before everything was bathed in a flood of silvery light.

June 21 (Monday). We marched twenty miles, and once more camped on Pole Creek. Our whole course lay along valleys, so that we obtained but one view of the mountains.

Several more antelopes were shot to-day. Either game is getting more plentiful, or else we are improving in the quality of our

hunters. The Infantry are very successful in their hunting excursions.

June 22 (Tuesday). We made seventeen miles, and encamped for the last time on Pole Creek. The Chief Engineer was in a short-cut humor, when we started out this morning, moved thereto by the guide. We were marched around three or four bluffs, followed by the entire command, train and all; and this species of countermarching gave rise to many forcible expressions of disapprobation. We soon found the proper road, however, and started anew.

We are encamped this evening within the Cheyenne Pass, at the foot of the Black Hills. When within about four miles of camp we encountered a numerous party of Cheyenne Indians, who stood a respectable distance from us and surveyed us with great timidity. This tribe has given the Government considerable trouble by its hostile demeanor, and it has been but a short time since its members were taught one or two wholesome lessons; hence their caution in approaching United States troops. However, they followed us to camp, and, seeing nothing threatening in our behavior, gradually mingled with us and opened the business of "swap." Before tattoo they became quite sociable, and some of them entertained us by their dexterity with the bow and arrow, and showed us the leaves that they mix with their tobacco, to render it milder and to increase the quantity. We, in return, amused them with the curious workmanship of our Colt's revolvers and showed them the mechanism of a watch, which struck them with amazement.

A good joke was circulated this morning, at the expense of one of the sons of the "Emerald Isle." It appears he was on post as a sentinel, and the officer of the day, visiting his post in the early hours of the night, was promptly challenged, "Who comes there?" "Officer of the Day," was the answer. As that appeared to be the end of the matter, and as the officer was kept standing, he inquired why the countersign, which was "Scott," was not demanded. The sentinel replied that he did not know the countersign was the same for both guards. "Oh, yes," rejoined the officer, "the countersign is general throughout the camp." A short time after, the sergeant of the guard visited the sentinel and inquired whether the officer of the day had been there. "Yes, shure," said Pat, "and he told me that the countersign was 'Gineral' throughout the camp, and not 'Scott.' "

June 23 (Wednesday). We marched seventeen miles to the high-

est of the Black Hills, and then encamped. This has been the most interesting march we have yet had; the road ran through rich, luxurious valleys, over high hills, through cuts, in deep, dark ravines, winding among immense rocks and boulders or burying itself in the shady depths of dense pine woods. In the valleys we saw, long, rich grass, decorated by countless millions of flowers and wild rose bushes in full bloom. And upon the hills we beheld curious specimens of nature's skill in carving, many fantastic figures among the large sandstone rocks furnishing ample proof of it. Here, too, might be seen the unusual sight of wild flowers, in all the glory of summer, elevating their gorgeous heads above a bed of pure snow. The snow we considered such a novelty, it being the latter part of June, that we indulged in a set-to with snowballs.

From our camp upon the summit a most magnificent view can be had. On one side there is a steep descent for about a quarter of a mile, then, by crossing a stream, one ascends a very steep mountain, thickly covered with pines. As many of the giants of the forest lie upon the ground, in decay, as are standing, and the ground is covered by decomposed vegetable matter to a depth of three or four feet. On the side from which we came the hills may be seen, one below the other, some red with sandstone, some white with clay, some green with grass and shrubbery, and others black with pines. On the third side rough, ragged, toppling crags are piled, one upon the other, in the wildest and most picturesque confusion. The fourth side is more charming, if possible, even than the others; the whole immense valley stretching far, far away to the Medicine Bow Mountains, the Laramie River winding across it like a silver thread. This was our advent among the mountain scenery, and with it we were delighted.

June 24 (Thursday). We marched eight and a half miles, descending the hills to the Laramie River, where we were obliged to make a temporary halt, this stream being too rapid and deep to ford. It was found necessary to gain a crossing with our wits and the little paraphernalia that could be found in the train. Operations were commenced by unloading some of the wagons and inflating five or six of the pontons, or cylindrical floats, all that we had. This done, we had to get a rope across the river. Tying a sash-cord to the end of a two-inch rope, and enough twine to reach across the stream being tied to the other end of the cord, a volunteer from the infantry swam over with the end of the twine in his

mouth. The rope was then drawn over, and the tools were tied to a cord, which ran on the rope with a slip-knot and was drawn over by the twine. A strong pile was driven into the ground and the ferry rope made fast to it. We then constructed a raft by lashing the pontons together, holding them with the wagon tongues and covering those again with the tailboards for a flooring. Another and heavier rope, being ready to send over, one of our men, Murphy, taking the end of the rope itself in his mouth, swam across with it. Tackling was rigged with blocks on the ferry rope, and to the side of the raft, and the raft made its first passage, with signal success, the current being the motive power.

So transportation commenced in earnest, a crew for the raft being selected from our men and First Sergt. F. W. Gerber taking command. Throughout the day the voice of the Sergeant could be heard above the din and uproar of this exciting occasion, shouting in the most impressive manner, as though implicit obedience could be obtained only by unheard of severity, "Haul away on the bow!" "Shlack on de shtern!" " 'Way 'nofe!" "Fent off!" and similar incomprehensible expressions.

To-night we are on one side of the river and the Infantry on the other, our train having been the first to cross.

June 25 (Friday). We arose early in the morning and resumed operations, the Company being divided into parties and distributed around wherever of the most service. Sergt. James E. Wilson took a party of the Infantry and rigged up another rope ferry, which did very valuable service throughout the day, ferrying over the loads of the wagons, while the wagons themselves were sent over on the first ferry.

An attempt was made to draw the wagons across the stream by a rope; one was thus launched, but before it reached the middle of the river it overturned and filled. Only a small portion of the wagon was visible above the water, and to get it out it was necessary to move the rope from the tongue to one of the wheels. Four of our men volunteered for this service (Sergeant Pierce, Artificer Jordan, McGill, and Pat Murphy) and these worked indefatigably for nearly two hours, in cold water about five feet deep, their labors being finally rewarded with success.

Evening found us all safely encamped on the west side of the Laramie River.

June 26 (Saturday). A very beautiful day. Every day since we have been here the forenoon has been warm and sultry, but at

noon a strong breeze springs up from the south and continues until sunset, when it ceases.

The Company was again divided into parties to-day, one bringing over the ropes and rigging upon the raft, and another coiling the ropes and repacking the wagons. It required the whole day to get things into marching order again, and night finds us all prepared for an early start upon the morrow.

Another metallic wagon was added to our train to-day—the Quartermaster, finding that we can handle pontons with such dexterity, thought it best to give us the care of them in order to facilitate matters in case of emergency. The Quartermaster informed us that it had been his intention to treat the Company with a little of the *aqua ardente,* but, owing to so much having been expended, both lawfully and surreptitiously, during the day, the liquor was almost "played out," and he could not afford the contemplated treat.

June 27 (Sunday). The Right Fork of the Laramie River was reached and crossed, and we encamped upon the farther side, after marching sixteen miles. The country passed over was a level valley, almost barren of vegetation; small knots of sickly looking grass grew at remote intervals, and found but a miserable support among the stones and sand. We soon came to the fork of the river. It is here divided into several streams, the first six or seven being somewhat shallow and the ground between soft and boggy; but the last two streams are deeper and more rapid, the water exceedingly cold, and rushing over long, sharp stones with alarming rapidity. We had a great deal of trouble getting our train across, every team having to be doubled. The shouts of the teamsters, and the struggles of the mules in the mud and water, could be heard long after darkness had settled upon the busy camp.

We beheld another concourse of Cheyenne Indians assembled upon the hill, patiently awaiting our arrival. They continued all the afternoon hanging about the camp, trying to "swap" their goods for lead and powder. But very little ammunition could they obtain from us; we knew their hostile, treacherous character too well, and our duty to the Government better. We traded with the Indians for moccasins, rifle-covers, knives with bead-worked scabbards, etc.

One of the Indians espied a set of artificial teeth when one of our men, Horace Sexton, laughed, exposing the gold clasps as he did so. A group of curious Indians gathered about, peering into his

mouth and chattering to one another, wondering that a white man should have gold teeth. In order to amuse them, Sexton took the teeth out of his mouth, whereupon the whole group of redskins retreated from him in terror; nor could they be induced to approach again, deeming him too familiar with black art to feel safe in his company.

One of the non-commissioned officers, Sergeant Gerber, wished to purchase a beautiful white pony that an Indian was riding. He offered him a handful of silver half dollars (the Indians are very eager to get hold of silver coins, out of which they make ornaments), but the Indian shook his head in the negative. Some biscuits and red chalk were added to the tempting pile of silver, but, after some hesitation, the Indian still declined the "swap." A new uniform coat was then offered also. This pleased the Indian wonderfully; turning it over and over, he surveyed it in every light, admired the yellow chevrons, laughed and betrayed great eagerness to get possession of the gaudy garment. But looking once more at his faithful pony, he declined the bargain. Suddenly, a bright idea seemed to strike him—he wanted the coat, and proposed to give the owner a squaw for it, which generous offer was of course declined, amid loud peals of laughter from the bystanders.

A group of Indians had gathered about the forge, gazing at it with reverential awe. One of them, making a quick motion of his hands, out from his body, and making an explosive sound with his breath, to represent the report of a gun, exclaimed, "Smoke wagon," meaning a cannon. At this moment, Bourcey, the blacksmith, who was fitting on a mule's shoe, returned with the shoe at the end of the tongs, and, thrusting it into the fire, began blowing the bellows. It was laughable to see the stampede among the redskins when they saw this ominous maneuver—they thought he was going to fire the "smoke wagon."

June 28 (Monday). We encamped on Coopers Creek, having marched fourteen miles. Our road to-day extended along the chain of mountains, and lay over a hard, gravelly surface, thickly covered with small, argillaceous stones. We passed a pond this morning, the shores of which were encrusted with a white, cyrstallized substance, which, upon inspection, proved to be magnesia and nitrate of soda. Antelopes were seen in great number during the march, and two were shot.

At the conclusion of our march we suddenly found ourselves

upon the brow of a high hill, overlooking a magnificent valley about two miles in length and a mile or more in width. The ground was covered with rich, luxuriant grass, mingled with patches of wild flowers of every hue. Two limpid mountain streams meandered across it, their banks skirted by graceful shrubbery and noble trees. We encamped in this Eden, and the calm peace that always pervades the mind when amidst the quiet beauties of wild nature came upon us weary pilgrims. The only drawback to this beautiful spot was the presence of that little demon—the mosquito. These insects annoyed us excessively; not a moment could we rest, but were obliged to keep our bodies continually in motion, and to burn tarred rope and buffalo chips in the tents.

A bog was discovered here which it was thought would have to be crossed in the morning, so the Company was turned out to repair it. We were sent about a mile to cut and carry logs and brush; but after we had completed the crossing a better and shorter road was found, and our labor amounted to nothing more than a proof of the powers of endurance of the invincible sixty-four.

June 29 (Tuesday). We marched thirteen miles, to Medicine Bow Creek. We passed safely over four creeks, and were congratulating ourselves upon our success when we were stopped short upon the banks of Medicine Bow or Rock Creek. Here was a doleful sight; the creek was about thirty yards wide, with a current which rushed over the large boulders on the bottom with fearful impetuosity. Where it struck a large rock the water would dash up to a height of five or six feet. A stone, weighing about thirty pounds was thrown in, and finally rested on the bottom about three yards downstream from where it first touched the water; and it would not then have stopped in its onward career had it not been arrested by coming into contact with a larger stone on the bottom.

All stood surveying these fearful rapids, waiting to see what the first order would be. It was decided that the Engineers should endeavor to get across and rig a bridge of driftwood. Several of us instantly prepared for the undertaking, a place being selected where the stream was divided by rocks and drift into four separate channels. The first two were not so swift as the others and we effected a crossing over them quite safely. The next was more difficult; several had a very narrow escape in crossing; but many, with the assistance of poles, succeeded in reaching the island. This was separated from the farther shore by a single additional chan-

nel, which, although narrow, was the most perilous of all. Three or four of the largest men made their way across, jumping first into the stream as far as they could, struggling as they were whirled down by the rushing current, and contriving at last to get hold of bushes on the far bank and so to drag themselves out of the water. By the aid of ropes we then managed to get a bridge of logs over the most dangerous channels, and the Regiment crossed with perfect safety.

A few rods below the wagons were crossing, and we were signally favored by Providence in getting everything over as well as we did, losing only two mules, which were carried off their feet by the current and instantly drowned.

June 30 (Wednesday). We went as far as the Medicine Bow Butte, a distance of sixteen miles. Our course lay over the lower bluffs of the Medicine Bow Mountains, ascending and descending the many steep hills. The surface was hard and gravelly, and covered with wild sage or artemisia.

About nine miles out we arrived at the "Devils Hole," a deep, rocky ravine, between the mountains, the almost precipitous sides of which are composed of loose, crumbling rocks. The descent was very steep and rough, requiring a great deal of labor to make it passable for the wagons. We worked some time at the stream here to enable the train to pass, and then proceeded. But we were soon brought to a standstill before another branch of Medicine Bow Creek, divided into several streams, and with the intervening ground swampy and covered with a thick undergrowth of sweetbrier; cottonwood, pine, and white poplar trees grow very densely here. When we reached the other side a rapid stream presented itself, which we soon bridged, however, with the trunks of trees.

We reached our camp ground quite late and very much fatigued and then prepared for muster, which took place at five o'clock. The Company was inspected by Colonel Andrews and the Quartermaster and Chief of Commissary. A large buck was killed today, and, tired as we were, we entered into the duties of the culinary department with considerable alacrity.

July 1 (Thursday). We went but three miles to Elk Creek, moving in order to secure a good camp ground. It is proposed to stay here for a few days, in order to recuperate the mules and get them shod, to cut timber for building bridges, and to burn a pit of charcoal—all preparatory to leaving the command, to commence our

duties as road engineers. We are to go in advance, with a working party of Infantry accompanying us, provisioned for twenty-eight days. Parties are detailed to-day to cut and bring in timber, which is obtained about a mile and a half up the mountain, where timber grows in abundance: pine, juniper, and tamarack.

July 2 (Friday). The timber party is still at work to-day, notwithstanding that it is cloudy and rainy. Our pontons were taken out and overhauled, and two or three of them were condemned. We received six more wagons from the Quartermaster, to carry timber. Clothing was issued to all who were in need of it.

This evening our hunters, who were after game, returned with a young antelope and some long-eared hares—we had, consequently, quite an excellent stew for supper.

July 3 (Saturday). We were off betimes upon our new road, and marched as far as Pass Creek, thirteen miles. At the very outset we had three wagons obstinately stuck in mud holes, requiring two hours, at least, to get in motion again. We cut brush and boughs, to make a footing for the mules, and tied ropes to the wheels, and ourselves joined in the pulling. In this way we dragged out two of the wagons, but the other had to be entirely unloaded, the contents being carried about twenty yards, through mud knee-deep.

Our course ran through a deep ravine all the way, and we crossed four creeks, one of them a very difficult one. The banks were about about five feet above the water, and densely covered by thorny bushes. The creek was too wide to jump, so we were compelled, *nolens volens,* to scratch our way down through the briers and then wade to the opposite side, where the scratching ensued again in climbing out. This nauseous smelling shrub, the sage, grows in great quantities. It makes our marching very disagreeable, being so stiff, gnarled and thorny, growing sometimes to the height of five feet and the largest trunks measuring from eighteen to twenty-two inches in circumference. Split and twisted, with a strong appearance of dead, dry wood, the bark resembles that of the cedar, being dry and shelly.

The day was exceedingly sultry and oppressive; the atmosphere was perfectly calm, not a leaf trembling, and the air seemed heated like that of a furnace, causing an unpleasant feeling of lassitude and a difficulty in respiration. The heat of the day was the more strange from the fact that ice was found this morning three-sixteenths of an inch in thickness.

July 4 (Sunday). We made one of the most fatiguing marches

of the entire trip, and employed our minds in contrasting our celebration of the American Independence of to-day with that of last year. In no very pleasant mood, we made a march of fourteen and a half miles, and encamped on the North Fork of the Platte River. When we arrived at the river we found all the bluffs of sandstone, of curious shapes and colors, looking like stupendous churches or other buildings in various styles of architecture, surmounted by lofty minarets, turrets, spires and domes. At night, the scene might easily be taken for a city standing near us.

The road all through the march was about six inches deep with dust, and not a green thing was visible to cheer the aching eyes, half blinded by the glaring light which was reflected by the heated sand —not a blade of grass, nothing but sage, from one end of the march to the other.

One of our men shot a sage hen near the close of the march, and when we came into camp we set about to ascertain whether these fowls can be made into good food; a stew was made, but the word *good* would be, I fear, a superfluity.

This afternoon First Sergeant Gerber took a party of men, the writer being one, and went some few miles up the river, to get a flat-boat which one of the guides informed us was hidden there. We found the boat, and as it grew dark launched it, commencing a passage down the rapid current of the Platte. We had not gone far, however, before the vessel upset, and the whole cargo of rifles and men was subjected to a cold bath. After some trouble in righting the boat the passage was resumed, two or three rifles and several hats making up all the losses that were sustained. But the members of the party also suffered considerable loss of blood during the trip, drawn by mosquitoes—they were so very troublesome that we had to wear handkerchiefs over our faces and gloves on our hands, and these were but a partial protection against their assaults.

July 5 (Monday). We commenced operations this morning by hauling our boat out of the water and repairing and caulking it, and covering it with canvas. We christened the vessel *The Sapper*, and I painted the name on the side. We launched the boat, towed it to the crossing and rigged up a rope ferry. All being ready we carried over two wagons, loaded with timbers, which are to start to-morrow morning, together with a party of men, to build a bridge over a creek.

July 6 (Tuesday). We began early to ferry over the train, and

by noon had most of the wagons across. The party was sent a few miles ahead to build the bridge, and having completed that service returned to camp at night. We, for our part, carried over the last load about 5 o'clock, and then pitched camp.

July 7 (Wednesday). At reveille the Company was detailed into parties; one party as pioneers, equipped with axes, and another as pontoniers, to be left here to take down the ferry and then follow after the Company.

The pontoniers crossed over in the ferry, and after taking the rigging apart were obliged to recross the river on the pontons. We lashed them together, and packing on our ropes and tools, we made the crossing, using shovels as paddles. We left all the appliances of the ferry, that we thought the Indians could not steal, behind at the river for the use of the Infantry. We then packed the wagon, which remained behind for us, and, shouldering our rifles, we trudged on in its rear. A short march was expected, but we passed over two bridges that our men had built—they were strong and substantial structures— and continued on and on, without seeing anything of camp. Warm weather, dusty roads, and disappointed hopes rendered us extremely tired. A shower arose about 2 p. m., but proved to be more bluster than rain, making the dust on the road just moist enough to clog on our shoes. The breeze which attended the shower, however, proved quite refreshing. We at last found the train, after marching twenty and a half miles, going into camp at the foot of the Park Mountains, where we joined the Company in time to pitch our tents with the others. Part of the Company, together with the Infantry detail, was engaged in erecting a bridge over the creek at this place, which was completed before dark.

A corporal of our Company and one of Lieutenant Bryan's men were sent back to the Infantry, this morning, to leave a couple of wagons and the forge with them. They took three days' provisions, and were mounted on mules.

July 8 (Thursday). We marched fourteen miles. A portion of the Company went in advance, with Sergeant Wilson, to cut timber, and another, under command of Sergeant Vanderslice, to cut timber and build a bridge. The Company marched on, and, going through Bryans Pass, entered the long-looked-for Bridgers Pass, where we entered on a hill which is the dividing line of the waters, from which they flow eastward and westward. Excellent trout and other fish are caught in these mountain streams. There are

no high, rocky mountains to be seen, and, I must confess, we were somewhat disappointed in the Pass. There is no vegetation except grass and artemisia, and the scenery is entirely too commonplace to satisfy our expectations of a pass through the *Rocky* Mountains.

Some Indians were seen scouting about, of the Arapahoe tribe. And Sergeant Wilson's party saw two bears, but as their rifles were stacked some distance off the bears managed to make their escape.

Our camp is pitched among the sage bushes, infested with a tick or bug which we dread as much as centipedes or scorpions; a knife can not cut them, and there is no way of killing them except by burning. The nearest water is three-quarters of a mile from camp, and that scarcely fit to drink, the name of the stream, "Muddy Creek," plainly indicating the nature of the water.

This evening we unloaded all the wagons and took all the bodies from the running-gear, in order to be ready to start early in the morning for timber.

One of the messengers who were sent back to the Infantry returned to camp this evening, our corporal having been left behind at the Platte, where one of the mules had been lost in crossing. They went back after the corporal this evening.

July 9 (Friday). We did not move our camp to-day, as twenty men were sent back twelve miles to cut timber. We spent nearly all the day in the woods, cutting fifty-four logs, each about thirty feet long and eighteen to twenty inches in diameter. We started back about 4 o'clock, but many little delaying accidents made it quite late before we reached camp. Some of our party fired the loads out of their rifles when we were near the Company, which alarmed the camp so much that all the men were turned out under arms, supposing that they were being attacked by Indians.

The Company was this morning divided into three squads, each assigned to a sergeant, to be kept by him during the campaign—each sergeant is to take his party for whatever service or duty he is given to perform.

July 10 (Saturday). Leaving the tents standing, as the sick were to remain here, we took the timber to where it was to be unloaded and used. Frequent recourse was had to shovels and picks on the trip, cutting down hills, filling up ravines, etc. We went about three miles, unloaded the timber, helped to pitch some tents, and then, the wagons having returned empty half an hour before,

we of the new guard were obliged to walk back to the old camp to mount guard. But arriving there, we first put a new load on the wagons, then were given a half-hour to clean our rifles before guard mount.

There are seventeen men on the sick report, nearly all of whom are afflicted with mountain or sage fever. No doctor is with us, so we are forced to content ourselves with what medical advice a lieutenant's commission can furnish.

Sergeant Wilson's party is ahead, with the Infantry detail, laying out and constructing a road.

The writer was given charge of the compass and the odometer, with instructions to report daily to Lieutenant Duane.

July 11 (Sunday). Camp was moved about 10.30 a. m., and when we came up with the other two parties they struck tents and joined us. We went about two miles farther, and encamped on Muddy Creek. Our camp ground is rough, stony, and full of tall sage bushes, which we had to cut away in order to get room to pitch our tents. We are again besieged with ticks, mosquitoes and snakes during the day, and entertained by the howls of the wolves and coyotes at night.

An enormous rattlesnake was killed this afternoon—we cut up his snakeship and fried him, and several of us made a hearty meal, Lieutenant Alexander assisting. We found the meat quite sweet and delicate, so that all snakes that come near us hereafter will be in imminent danger of the frying pan.

The tobacco store was opened this evening, and we received our allowance of the same.

July 12 (Monday). At reveille the Company was divided. Forty men and two wagons were given to Sergeant Wilson. We found a great many places along the selected route which required improvement—there were hills to grade, stone walls to build, ravines to fill, and one bridge to construct over Muddy Creek. We were so busily employed during the day that we had no time to cook or eat, and when night came we were hungry enough to appreciate the cracker and piece of raw bacon upon which we made our supper.

July 13 (Tuesday). We arose early, our only reveille being the voice of the Sergeant, calling: "All hands ahoy! Let us early birds be out looking for the worm, for only the early bird catches him." We arose, had breakfast, and sallied out to work, leaving our tents standing and everything behind except haversacks and canteens,

which were too necessary to be slighted. We began the construction of a bridge, but could not finish it on account of the timber not arriving. The Company camp was moved to-day to within sight of the bridge.

We enjoy ourselves vastly while on these working parties, notwithstanding hardships and privations. No roll calls, no guard mounting, no policing—nothing but peace and quiet from the time we quit work until we retire to sleep. We spend the evenings in joking, singing, and smoking.

July 14 (Wednesday). We arose at 4, and packed our rifles and accoutrements in the wagons, two men only in each of the four parties keeping their guns, in case we should be able to start up some game. We gained about eight miles on our journey to-day. Many deep gullies were encountered, requiring some time to be put into condition for travelling. A camp ground was selected among the Sand Peaks, outside of Bridgers Pass, and on Muddy Creek. It was within an hour of sunset, but as the Company train is to proceed some miles farther to-morrow, we were obliged to go a mile ahead, where an immense gully, about eighty feet wide, with sides about fifteen feet high, nearly perpendicular, was to be filled and graded. We all set to with a will, and finished this great bugbear of an undertaking within an hour. Sergeant Wilson received four days' more rations from the Company. The guides joined us this evening, as the country we are to pass over to-morrow is somewhat difficult.

July 15 (Thursday). This morning, as a long march was to be made on account of the scarcity of water, we were turned out at 1 a. m. Several large fires were built and we sat about them to eat our breakfast, after which, by their light, we struck tents and loaded the wagons. About 2 o'clock we assembled about the fire and made the surrounding mountains ring with the strains of the "Star Spangled Banner." There, in the midst of the wilderness, where the human form is but rarely seen, where the stillness of the night is almost painfully oppressive, where no sound is heard to break the spell of silence save the solitary howl of some disconsolate wolf, the shrill voice of the brooding owl, or the mournful, plaintive cry of the cuckoo—there did our voices swell out in harmony as we published to the hills our patriotic principles. And when, the chorus returned for the last time, and every voice was exerted to its utmost to do justice to the language, it seemed as though those very hills had caught the inspiration. As our voices ceased,

and, for a moment, not a word was spoken, back from the distant hills came the sound, as of many voices, bearing the burden—

"O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave."

Three cheers were given for the invisible songsters, who as heartily responded.

Then we shouldered our tools and in single file followed the footsteps of the guide's pony into the darkness which surrounded us. All along the line jokes passed from man to man, laughter rang out in merry peals, and occasionally a song burst forth. All was joy and mirth.

Our course lay principally over an extensive plain. In the distance before us could be seen the irregular outline of the mountains toward which we are making our way. After marching eighteen and a half miles we came to our camp ground, and a most dismal one it is. No grass to be seen—nothing but deep sand and sage bushes; no wood nor chips to be found, and in their place only small twigs and sage bushes to burn; the only water that from a spring which furnishes poor water and insufficient quantities of that. The low ground about, which is all moist, is encrusted with nitrate of soda, magnesia, and potash. A severe storm of hail and rain ocurred after we reached camp, and between mud and inconvenience our patience was sorely tried. But I believe, like "Mark Tapley," the worse the circumstances the jollier we felt.

The Company train came up and joined us this evening, and our tents were all pitched together. Our tools were turned in, as we are not to go in advance as a working party any more.

July 16 (Friday). We went only six and a half miles to-day, owing to so many places in the road requiring work. We encamped about a half mile from Haystack Springs, situated in a deep, rocky ravine at the base of the mountains, the name derived from three or four high rocks in the vicinity which bear a strong resemblance, in color and shape, to haystacks. The country over which we passed is rocky, rough, and densely covered with wild sage, through which we struggled at the risk of decorating the bushes with shreds of our clothing and staining them with our blood, which trickled from numerous scratches inflicted by the thorny branches. No living thing is found among these sage bushes except sage hens, a spectral looking hare, ravens, ticks, and ants.

July 17 (Saturday). We marched fourteen and a half miles and

encamped at "Wolfs Spring," discovered by one of our Indian hunters, Wolf, and named in honor to the discoverer. Our camp is on the top of a very high hill, and the spring—the only place from which we can obtain water—is situated at its base, the descent being long, steep, and very rough. The water is pure, cold, and clear as crystal.

To-day a new disposition was made, a working party being detailed, and the remainder of the Company carrying arms. At every place requiring improvements the Company and train halted and waited until the working party was finished.

A fine, large buffalo was shot, and the tool wagon was dispatched to bring in the spoils. In the evening the game was divided.

Two expressmen, accompanied by Allen, our chief guide, left us this afternoon for Fort Bridger, to execute some important business and to bring back the mail.

July 18 (Sunday). In the morning a road was to be cut around the base of the hill. The task was accomplished by noon, the excavation being carried to a depth of seven feet on the upper side, through alternate strata of magnesian limestone and sandstone. We then struck camp and moved on, going only three miles, however, as water could not be obtained within nine or ten miles beyond this place, and it was too late to attempt to reach it. We camped at Banner Bluff, on Bitter Creek.

The bluff is a grand and curious geological formation, about twelve hundred feet in height, the side almost vertical and composed of alternate horizontal layers of protozoic and red sandstone, reminding one of the stripes of the American flag.

July 19 (Monday). We marched only ten and a half miles, but did not reach our new camp ground, which is again on Bitter Creek, until quite late, some obstacle or other presenting itself every few hundred yards to arrest our progress. The country was of the worst possible description, barren and sandy; the surface of the ground was baked to a hard crust, and broken by a network of deep fissures, some of them two or three inches across, resembling the gaps of a miniature earthquake. No vegetation, except a stunted growth of artemisia.

July 20 (Tuesday). We again encamped on Bitter Creek, after a march of fifteen miles. There is no improvement in the aspect of the country, although there was not so much labor required in the construction of the road, the country being for the most part level or rolling. A great deal of poor coal is scattered over the ground,

which is covered, throughout the latter six or eight miles of our march with a complete bed of these fragments, mixed with basaltic trap and a dark conglomerate containing an immense number of small shells.

To-day we were compelled to mourn the loss of one of our companions, who, afflicted with apoplexy, was left, a few days ago, with the Regiment. He died at 8 p. m. and was buried in his uniform, the Sixth Regiment escorting the body to its wild and lonely resting place, with the customary military honors. I, myself, carved the board erected at his head:

In Memory of Wm. G. Slayter
Of Co. "A," U. S. Engineers,
Died July 19, 1858, Aged 27 years.

His was a frank and genial nature, and his many good qualities and cheerful disposition had established him as a universal favorite among his comrades. His death threw a gloom over our usually cheerful and buoyant spirits. This evening the camp was still. The customary song was not heard—no hearty peals of laughter rang out to disturb the solemn silence.

July 21 (Wednesday). We made but a short march to-day, the country over which we passed being unfavorable for the construction of the road. We encountered many deep gullies, which detained us a considerable time. Nine miles' marching brought us to another camp on Bitter Creek. About three miles from yesterday's camp we discovered the road that Captain Marcy made a few weeks ago. It was on the opposite side of the creek, however, and we could not form a junction with it, owing to the difficulty of crossing the creek.

July 22 (Thursday). This day brought us a very tiresome and fatiguing march to Sulphur Springs, nineteen and two-thirds miles. The sun shot down its melting rays with overpowering intensity, and, to add to our misery, no water was found that was fit to drink. The bed of the creek was dry, a misfortune that we did not expect, as the stream where we crossed it was quite deep. True, two puddles of stagnant water did present themselves to our longing eyes, but how grievous was our disappointment when, upon tasting, the water proved to be brackish and sulphurous. Yet, such was the thirst of our men, that some took a hearty drink of it, although the majority reluctantly resumed the march, looking eagerly in the distance as we reached the summit of each successive hill,

to see if we could descry the sparkling flash of water. At the conclusion of our march several pools were discovered, near which we camped; but we found that these springs were also sulphurous. As we did not reach camp until dark our dinner was not ready until midnight, when all who preferred food to sleep partook of this most excellent cheer, by the light of a greasewood fire. Our teamsters, accompanied by the guard, were obliged to march a mile, after reaching camp, in order to get grass for the animals.

This evening the expressmen who were sent a few days ago to Fort Bridger returned, bringing with them our mail. We soon forgot the fatigue of the body in the mental joys of the intercourse with our absent loved ones.

July 23 (Friday). We marched sixteen miles and encamped on the bank of the Green River. Throughout the march, as yesterday, no water could be found that we could drink. Many of the men allayed their thirst by mixing molasses and vinegar. Vasco Nuñez de Balboa was not more delighted at the discovery of the Pacific Ocean than were we at the sight of the cool, clear water of the river, to which we helped ourselves liberally. A rope ferry and a flatboat are kept here for the convenience of the Government troops and trains. We are once more favored with a grass bed instead of one of dust, and with white poplar wood for fuel, instead of buffalo chips.

July 24 (Saturday). We merely crossed the river, our train being safely moved by noon to the west side, where we pitched our tents, once more on the sand. In the afternoon a high wind arose, which blew the sand about in such quantities that we were obliged to keep within our tents. But no place was exempt from the general plague, even our boxes, when opened, being found to have their contents covered with fine dust.

July 25 (Sunday). We encamped on Blacks Fork, marching a distance of fourteen and a half miles.

July 26 (Monday). We marched seventeen miles farther, and encamped on Hams Fork. The emigrant road to Camp Scott was struck by us early in the morning, and we were greatly rejoiced to find our road-making duties terminated. The Emigrant Road is wide, level, and gravelly, and was quite pleasant to travel upon, especially for us who had been struggling through sage bushes for more than two weeks. Several parties of emigrants were seen slowly wending their way toward the Great Salt Lake. All had rough, uncouth wagons and poor, clumsy oxen—and they them-

selves were rougher than any part of their outfit. We crossed a bridge over Hams Fork, at which an infantry guard is stationed to protect it from the depredations of the Indians and Mormons. Several Mormons came to camp with wagons loaded with produce, for which they demanded extravagant prices. They were immediately surrounded by us, as much to see bona fide Mormons as to purchase these comforts and luxuries of which we have been so long deprived. We were soon involved in warm disputes concerning the justice of the Government and the culpability of the Mormon leaders. They appeared to be very intelligent, and evidently considered themselves a badly used people.

July 27 (Tuesday). We marched nineteen and a half miles, and encamped again on Hams Fork, which we were obliged to ford four times during the day. The country looks more fertile. We beheld, during the day, unmistakable proof of the severity of Colonel Cook's march of last winter, in the immense number of dead cattle scattered along the road. We counted over three hundred carcasses of oxen and mules, and in some places as high as ten, twelve, and fifteen in one group.

July 28 (Wednesday). We remained in camp, the Commanding Officer having gone to Fort Bridger to ascertain if any orders were waiting for him. This afternoon three companies of volunteers passed our camp en route for the States; they were composed, we were informed, of the teamsters who came out last fall and winter. They looked as though they had seen some pretty hard service, but strode along nevertheless with the determination, apparently, not to allow distance, inconvenience, or other influence to retard their homeward progress. They regarded us with an expression which seemed to say, "God help you, poor fellows! We pity you, indeed."

July 29 (Thursday). We moved out at noon, and encamped on Henrys Fork, four miles farther. Lieutenant Alexander and eight men, with wagons, left us before daylight to go to the Fort for rations. When we reached our new camp we found them already there, awaiting our arrival. The move to-day was necessary in order to obtain a fresh supply of grass, it being closely cropped by the cattle belonging to the ox-trains which camp along these streams. A wagon load of soldiers passed our camp, going to relieve the guard at the bridge.

July 30 (Friday). No march to-day. Our herd was sent about a mile up the stream, half the guard accompanying it, relieved at noon by the other half. The Infantry detachment, which we left

behind a few days ago to await the arrival of the Regiment, joined us this evening and pitched camp alongside of us. The Mormons are again in camp with butter, eggs, cheese, and onions.

July 31 (Saturday). We remained in camp all day. No duty was required of us and we enjoyed a good rest, a luxury we have had but once since our start from Leavenworth.

August 1 (Sunday). We moved on this morning and encamped within a half mile of Fort Bridger. The Fort, as it appears to us from our camp, resembles an extensive camp more than a fort, and is not inappropriately named "Camp Scott." It is situated very low in a fertile valley, directly at the foot of the highest chain of the Rocky Mountains we have yet seen, and watered by an intricate maze of mountain streams.

This is the termination of our outward journey. We are a hundred and thirteen miles from Salt Lake City, and very eager to proceed—tormented with impatience by the dilatory movements, continually anxious lest a peace should be concluded before we reach Salt Lake. Day and night we are absorbed with speculation as to whether we will proceed to join General Johnston or receive orders to return to the East.

August 2 (Monday). A party of us visited the Fort. It is composed mostly of tents of all shapes and sizes. Attempts have been made to render them comfortable for the winter by covering them with two or three thicknesses of canvas. In front is erected a substitute for a piazza, consisting of a sort of entry or hall enclosed with wagon covers, while in the rear is seen a huge stack of mud blocks, arranged as though a fruitless effort was made to get them into some kind of symmetrical form, probably to represent masonry. We inquired whether these appendages were intended for ornament or use, and were informed that they were chimneys. The garrison consists of three companies, one of cavalry and two of infantry, which are now engaged in erecting four log buildings to be occupied as quarters during the coming winter.

The fort proper is represented by a wall about twenty-five feet in height and three feet thick, built of cobblestones, whitewashed inside and out. Within stands the commissary and sutler's stores, together with a confused mass of rude buildings, in the pig-pen style of architecture. The stone wall is flanked by two well-built lunettes, with a relief of about fourteen feet, the gabion and fascine work being substantially made and placed. In the salient of one of the lunettes is a small brass four-pounder, mounted in bar-

bette upon a wooden platform. The ditch is enclosed with an abatis, which, considering the material and means available, is quite an achievement in the art of field fortification.

Great numbers of ox and mule wagons were corralled about the Fort, having come out in trains from time to time. But the oxen that once plodded their weary way before them have long since furnished food for the garrison, and the mules have been sent to Salt Lake Valley. When the wagons accumulate in such numbers as to form an obstacle they are burned, being rarely sent back East.

To-day is election day in this country, and although we have been residents of the place such a short time, we were besieged by the friends of the candidates and the candidates themselves, for our support. As there are but seventeen civilians about the Fort the majority of the offices are filled by soldiers. The ticket consists of one representative, three selectmen, one sheriff, one recorder, one assessor, one coroner, one surveyor, one stray-pound keeper, one justice of the peace and one constable.

A supply train of fifty-two wagons came in to the Fort to-day, of which half remained here and the other half proceeded to join General Johnston.

August 3 (Tuesday). The day was spent in putting in order the contents of our train, which had fallen into confusion during the march, and preparing ourselves either to continue into the farther regions of Utah, or to turn about and take a second view of those we have already once seen. Tools were overhauled and assorted, account taken of expenditures, and clothing and other necessities issued.

August 4 (Wednesday). A day occupied in writing and reading.

August 5 (Thursday). The three men whom we left behind with the Sixth came to camp this afternoon, quite recovered from the fever. The Regiment arrived and encamped on the opposite side of the Fort; the remainder of the day and evening were naturally employed in mutual visits between the two camps.

THE RETURN MARCH.

August 6 (Friday). Farewell, Brigham! This time ill fortune has stepped between us. We had set our minds upon becoming acquainted with you, but we are reluctantly compelled to forego the pleasure. Farewell, ye Mormon dames! The fates have decreed that you are not yet to be released from your odious thralldom. This time Duplicity, in the garb of Peace—Evil arrayed in the

robes of Amity—have triumphed, and Justice, with a mournful smile and a pitying tear, puts aside her sword and scale.

Such was the mental address which dwelt in our minds to-day, when we received orders to return with all expedition and resume our customary duties at West Point. The joyous prospect of meeting with old associations and once more clasping the hands of our dear friends was partially dampened by thoughts of the long, weary distance between us and them, and of the numerous hardships and difficulties which lie before us. We are to return by the Northern Route, through the South Pass and Fort Laramie, and as we are to start early Monday we are busily engaged to-day in making the necessary preparations.

August 7 (Saturday). To-day we finished our preparations for the march and devoted the remainder of the day to rest. Many changes were made in the personnel of the teamsters and other employees. As many of the teamsters of the commissary train desired to return to the States, they were sent to drive for us, and our teamsters were taken to supply their places, the Sixth Infantry being under orders to proceed to Oregon. One individual we parted with reluctantly, Mr. Dwyer, the assistant wagon-master of our train, a man of noble character and a great favorite with us. He was appointed full wagon-master in the Sixth.

August 8 (Sunday). This was hailed as a day of rest, on which we did nothing but think of the number of miles to be travelled before reaching our much-wished-for haven.

August 9 (Monday). We started upon our return march, encamping on Blacks Fork, a distance of eighteen and a quarter miles.

August 10 (Tuesday). We encamped on Blacks Fork again, after a march of sixteen and three-quarter miles. When we were approaching the bridge at Hams Fork one of our men, Bourcey, the blacksmith, was thrown from the forge, the mules having been frightened at the body of a dead ox lying in the road. His face was badly cut and it was feared he was injured internally, as the wheel passed across his breast. He was left at the bridge, in care of the guard stationed there.

August 11 (Wednesday). We reached the upper crossing of the Green River. This has proved a very severe march, owing to the heat and sandy road and to the length of the march, twenty-three and a third miles. About 9 a. m. we arrived at the junction of this road and the new one we made through Bridgers Pass. We

reached the lower crossing of the Green River at about half-past one. There we beheld large heaps of iron scattered about near the river, a great deal of it imbedded in ashes; this, we were informed, was all that remained of the Government train the Mormons had destroyed at the commencement of hostilities. As the river was too deep for fording at the lower crossing, we continued to the upper one, where we managed to get safely across, the men holding on behind the wagons.

August 12 (Thursday). We marched nineteen miles and arrived at the Big Sandy Creek. A herd of cattle passed us to-day numbering nine hundred head; they seemed in good condition and gave us evidence of the plentifulness of grass along the route over which we are to pass.

August 13 (Friday). We continued the march to the Little Sandy, nineteen miles farther. The road was hard and gravelly, the day cool, with a bracing breeze, and we came into camp quite fresh and strong. Our camp stands upon the bank of the creek, where excellent water is available, wood convenient, and grass for the herd plentiful and good.

August 14 (Saturday). We reached Pacific Springs, having marched twenty and a half miles. The ground was rough and hilly, and the mules lagged a little. We like this kind of country best for marching, as we have longer rests before the train catches up at the end of our hour-long marches.

To-day we encountered an ox-train, the wagon-master of which had yeast-powders for sale. We purchased some with great alacrity, as we have been obliged to bake our cakes and bread without that ingredient.

The water here is found only in grassy springs and is not very pure.

August 15 (Sunday). We left camp this morning to make about a seven mile march to Sweet Water, where we could find good grass and water, but the march was drawn out to the length of twenty-three and a half miles. We went through the South Pass, which is hardly deserving the name of a pass, being nothing but a valley between hills. The Wind River Mountains have been in sight all day, presenting, with their irregular outlines, an imposing appearance. They are high and rocky, with little or no vegetation.

Our camp to-night is on a branch of Sweet Water Creek.

August 16 (Monday). We remained in camp, enjoying a rest from the fatigue of marching.

August 17 (Tuesday). We reached Sweet Water Creek, after a march of twenty-three miles, during which we passed over a ridge of hills called the "Devils Backbone." It was a very oppressive day, owing to the heat and dust.

We met a contented looking family of emigrants, moving slowly westward. They were quite surprised to see us and seemed to think we were going the wrong way.

August 18 (Wednesday). We again encamped on Sweet Water Creek, a distance of twenty-two and a quarter miles. A number of officers of the Tenth Infantry, going to the States on leave of absence, stopped at our camp, and went on in advance with our officers. When we reached our new camp they were comfortably enjoying a prairie siesta.

August 19 (Thursday). Seventeen and a half miles were traversed in to-day's march, which was characterized by many interesting features. The Rattlesnake Mountains, through which the whole march lay, are very high and rocky, but instead of being a continuous chain they stand separate from each other, allowing the road to wind a comparatively level course between them. We passed through Rattlesnake Pass, a very wild, craggy gorge between the first peaks, the rocks and stones along its precipitous sides thickly lettered over with rude attempts of ambitious persons to hand down their names to posterity. Toward the close of the march we passed through Sweet Water Cañon, the most sublime spectacle we have yet witnessed. The coolness of this delightful spot was a strong inducement for lingering, but duty pointed us over the barren prairie again, and very reluctantly we left Sweet Water Cañon behind.

We passed the Fourth Column, consisting of four companies of the Seventh Infantry and a company of Cavalry, commanded by Colonel Morrison.

August 20 (Friday). We moved on to the Devils Gate, a distance of twenty and a half miles. The route lay principally along Sweet Water Creek, the sight of which, its banks covered by a luxuriant growth of grass, was very welcome to our eyes; and the road, too, instead of being dusty, was hard and well beaten.

Company F, Seventh Infantry, passed us to-day, escorting the families of some of the men of the Sixth Infantry. We also saw a large trading post during the march, for the benefit of the neighboring tribes of Indians and profit of the Canadian-French proprietor. It was, as is usual with trading posts, surrounded by a number of

Indian wigwams, the denizens of which were lazily lolling in the sun.

August 21 (Saturday). At reveille all who wished to go through the Devils Gate were requested to step to the front; the whole Company unanimously presented themselves for a visit to his Satanic Majesty's portals. The Gate is a gorge between the mountains, which, apparently, have been parted for the express purpose of giving passage to the waters of Sweet Water Creek. On one side the massive rocks rise to a height of three hundred feet, projecting almost across the gap; at this part a deep, black fissure starts from the bottom and ascends to the very top, resembling a chimney; the gap about eighty feet wide, the bottom covered with large boulders. We scrambled into every accessible nook and corner, yelling and shouting like maniacs.

We went on to Greasewood Creek, marching twenty-one and three-quarter miles. Another large trading post was seen to-day, kept by Louis Greenyard; it is said to be the most extensive post along the route. Mr. Greenyard has erected a bridge across the stream at this place.

August 22 (Sunday). We marched twenty-three and a quarter miles and encamped on the banks of the North Fork of the Platte River. As on last Sunday, we broke camp to move only a few miles to obtain grass for the herd; but we made a long march, nevertheless. The route lay over a very hilly and rocky country. At one time we would be gazing from the top of a high hill, at another winding across the bottom of a barren, dusty valley. The road was sandy and the water scarce. We hailed the view of the North Fork with acclamations of joy. At our camp a trading and mail post is stationed, and a little below stands an Arapahoe Indian village, the inhabitants of which soon turned out to visit us.

August 23 (Monday). We did not move camp, but adopted this as a day of rest. The Indians, no doubt, thought we stayed in order to give them an opportunity of making acquaintance, which they set about doing in a very indefatigable manner, greatly to our annoyance, for they are a filthy, indolent tribe. We were obliged to remain in or near our tents all day, to keep them out, not through fear of their taking anything, for they appear to be honest, but for fear of their leaving vermin behind.

August 24 (Tuesday). We encamped on Little Muddy Creek, after a march of eighteen and a half miles. We followed the course of the river a few miles, over a very uneven road. One hill

was so steep that the ordinary teams could not draw the wagons; we were forced to double the teams, take half the train up first and then return for the remainder. We passed the Fifth Column this morning, composed of Companies A and D, Seventh Infantry, and a company of the Third Artillery, with a long train. The Sixth Column then passed us, Companies I and E of the Seventh Infantry and two companies of Cavalry, having under their protection a number of emigrant wagons going to Salt Lake, the emigrants being principally Danes and Germans.

About two miles below where we are encamped this evening a bridge is built across the Platte and left in charge of two companies of the Fourth Artillery.

A travelling grocery store came into camp this evening, a vehicle built after the manner of a stage, and quite as ornamentally painted. The usual commodities sold in Western stores were retailed at very moderate prices from this fancy curiosity shop. As soon as custom began to lag, the proprietor closed up shop and, whipping up his oxen, started in search of a new location.

August 25 (Wednesday). We marched twenty-two miles, which brought us to Deer Creek. The country is now assuming a very interesting appearance to us, at least, who have been so long in the wilderness. Our camp-ground, to-night, is a veritable flower garden; the fields yellow with flowers, the green trees, the white, sandy banks of the river, and the river itself, form a very beautiful spectacle. A village, containing about a dozen log houses and Indian huts, stands close by our camp. It is called "Dacotah City," and the inhabitants are French and Indians.

August 26 (Thursday). Having marched eighteen and a quarter miles, we camped on La Prèlé Creek. At Box Elder Creek we stopped at noon. The mules were turned out to feed on the fine crop of grass, and the cooks prepared our dinner. After two or three hours' rest we again took up our march.

August 27 (Friday). We encamped on La Bonté Creek, after a march of eighteen miles. The country seems to undergo a general improvement as we approach Fort Laramie. Toward the close of the march Laramie Peak came into view.

August 28 (Saturday). Our camp was pitched on Horseshoe Creek, concluding a march of twenty-three and a half miles. A great deal of timber was seen and we passed through several romantic looking glens and ravines. The weather seemed mild and many of us rolled ourselves in our blankets and, throwing ourselves

upon the ground by the fires, were soon lulled to sleep by the prairie serenaders—wolves, buffaloes, owls, whippoorwills, and coyotes. But during the night the fires became extinguished, and, a dense fog having arisen, our blankets were saturated with water when we awoke.

August 29 (Sunday). We reached Bitter Cottonwood Creek after a march of eighteen and a quarter miles. During most of the forenoon a thick fog enveloped the country, effectually veiling the surrounding scenery from our view—much to our annoyance, as we were expecting to come within sight of Fort Laramie on this or to-morrow's march. We passed several Indian lodges in the morning, from which a few dusky warriors issued forth to greet us with the well-known words of welcome, "How! How!" This evening our guide went ahead to the Fort, intending to return to-morrow in order to direct us by a short cut.

August 30 (Monday). After marching twenty-one miles we entered the long desired Fort Laramie. We again struck the Platte River shortly after breaking camp. The whole road from Fort Bridger to Fort Laramie has been infested with a nuisance in the shape of dead cattle. Not one day's march have we made since leaving Fort Bridger that we are not obliged to pass by many of these disgusting objects. We were informed by a teamster of an ox train that one wagon-master had lost fifty cattle in one night, with the bloody murrain, an epidemic which prevails among the cattle in these regions to an alarming extent.

Our camp to-night is on the Laramie River, about half a mile below the Fort.

August 31 (Tuesday). We prepared for muster, which took place at 8 a. m., the Company being mustered by our own Commanding Officer. The Indians are about in great numbers, hanging around the camp all day, begging for food and carrying away the offal which is left after killing our beef. Several old crones and children have been scratching in the grass, from daylight until dark, collecting the grains of corn which the mules had left. At one of their villages across the river they have been lamenting the demise of one of their tribe; they commence their orgies at dusk with a low, plaintive wail, which they gradually increase in volume until it becomes a wild, furious chant, occasionally interrupted by dismal shrieks.

September 1 (Wednesday). The day was spent in preparing to resume our march, rations being drawn and many articles, includ-

ing the forge, being turned over to the Quartermaster at the Fort. Some teamsters were discharged and others engaged in their places.

September 2 (Thursday). We marched twenty-three and a quarter miles, and encamped on the Platte. The site was so densely covered with wild marigold that we called the camp "Marigold Plain." We passed two Indian villages to-day, the inhabitants of which belong to some of the tribes that have been at the gathering to hunt buffaloes at the South Fork of the Platte; having furnished themselves with winter provisions they are now on the return to their usual grounds.

September 3 (Friday). We encamped near Scotts Bluff, having marched twenty-two miles. It was an exceedingly tiresome march, owing to the heat and dust. Several mirages were seen in looking down the river. We passed two more Indian camps and met many Indians scattered along the road, on their way to the West. An ox-train is corralled alongside of us this evening, the wagon-master of which informs us that the Cheyenne Indians are collected on the South Platte in such numbers as to render them quite insolent, and that they have even attempted to force wagon-masters of trains to give them provisions.

September 4 (Saturday). We pitched camp near Castle or Courthouse Rocks, after having marched twenty-four miles. This has been a more oppressive day even than yesterday.

September 5 (Sunday). We remained in camp. As fuel of every description is scarce at this place the police party was sent out on mule-back, with gunny-bags, in quest of buffalo chips.

September 6 (Monday). Our march extended as far as Platte Meadows, twenty-five and a half miles. Toward the latter part of the afternoon it began to rain, and has continued a dismal, dreary fall all night.

September 7 (Tuesday). We again encamped on the Platte, marching twenty-two and a half miles. The mosquitoes were very troublesome during the march, following us in perfect clouds—do all that we could to prevent it, we were soon covered with stings.

September 8 (Wednesday). We marched twenty and a half miles and once more encamped on the North Platte.

September 9 (Thursday). We encamped near Ash Hollow, a distance of seventeen and a half miles. We followed the sandy bed of the Hollow until we arrived at the point where the road leaves it and ascends a high hill. Before undertaking the ascent, we unharnessed the mules, turned them out to grass, and ate our din-

ner. Night found us crossing the hills between the two forks of the Platte, beneath a steady fall of rain. We were at last obliged to encamp upon the road, where no water could be obtained; but we had anticipated this want, having brought all the barrels and kegs that we could possibly muster filled with water from the spring in the hollow.

September 10 (Friday). We pitched our camp on the south side of the South Fork of the Platte River, concluding a march of eighteen and a half miles. The crossing of the river was very different from that of three months ago; we merely rolled up our pantaloons and forded the stream, coming out on the other side perfectly dry, the water being no place more than knee deep. We continued along the river about four miles and then encamped.

September 11 (Saturday). We marched twenty-three and a half miles and encamped again on the South Fork. We passed a mule-train which was taking out the families of the Fourth Artillery and the Second Dragoons.

September 12 (Sunday). We stayed in camp to-day for a rest. A few of us got together and prepared what in this country is called a sumptuous dinner—boiled tongue, fried bacon and beefsteak, liver and onions, flap-jacks, boiled rice and chocolate. This feast being spread out in tempting array on the ground, two or three of the men in the next tent were invited to dinner and we gathered around it, sitting cross-legged. In the afternoon the tent was converted into a wine press. Some of the men had found grapes in their rambles and brought as many as they could carry. Accordingly, putting all the empty cups into the service, we pressed the grapes into them, mashing them with our hands. After working indefatigably a couple of hours, staining ourselves from head to foot and spoiling all the silk handkerchiefs we could obtain in the process of straining, we procured about a gallon of grape juice.

September 13 (Monday). We encamped at Fremonts Spring, having marched twenty-four and a half miles. This is a very poor camp site. The water is stagnant, being found only in a slough of black mud, and fuel is very scarce. The comet which was discovered June 2d by Donati was rediscovered by us this evening; the appearance of the phenomenon was highly interesting, as we had an excellent opportunity of seeing it over our prairie horizon.

September 14 (Tuesday). We marched twenty-five and three-quarter miles, and encamped near Box Elder Creek. The water is even worse than at Fremonts Spring, and we were obliged to dig

for some that was fit for use. The mosquitoes being very numerous and bloodthirsty here, we burnt an incense of buffalo chips in our tent this evening. Several buffaloes were seen during the march, feeding, about a mile from the road and almost at the foot of the sand hills which extend the whole length of the river. They were too far off, however, to permit a chase.

September 15 (Wednesday). We encamped on the main Platte, after a march of twenty-five and three-quarter miles. When we left camp, this morning, a shaggy brute of a buffalo came very close to the company; he soon paid the forfeit of his life for his curiosity, being shot by Lieutenant Alexander. A short time afterward a small herd came close to us. Lieutenant Alexander gave chase and wounded a fine, large fellow that ran directly toward us. When he came within range a half-dozen of us crept toward him, but at the first shot, being hit, he turned about and ran in a different course. We continued the chase, but were all recalled to the company except one, who followed the animal, firing at intervals, and watched by us with intense interest. At last the buffalo seemed exhausted and stopped, the hunter drawing near him. We saw the man shoot and saw the beast leap into the air, then turn and charge on the man who had fired at him. The whole Company started to his rescue, loading as we ran, and the first few shots turned the buffalo toward the hills, in which direction he bounded with mighty strides, notwithstanding the fact that he was riddled with bullets. He was finished later by some of the men with the train, and brought into camp.

The valley, on the other side of the river, is literally black with buffaloes. Soon after we made camp a large fellow waded leisurely across the river, just in front of the camp, so that we were able to get a near view of him. He was one of the ugliest of these ugly brutes. Shot after shot was fired at the animal, yet he stood firm and resolute, not a motion betraying pain or fear. There was something noble in the manner in which he faced his persecutors, as though, knowing he could not reach them, he could yet show them he knew how to die. Suddenly he curved his tail, a shudder went through his mighty frame, and he rolled over dead. The men waded out and cut him up. After dark the wolves finished what the men had left.

September 16 (Thursday). We marched twenty-four and a half miles and camped near Plum Creek. The buffaloes made their appearance in great numbers; one small herd ran across the road,

directly in front of the train, which sudden charge frightened the mules into a general, though short-lived, stampede. Nine buffaloes were killed to-day, only three of which, however, were brought in.

September 17 (Friday). We encamped on the Platte River, after a march of twenty-four and a half miles. It proved to be a severe march, the day being hot and the roads dusty. Our canteens became empty toward the latter part of the march and we suffered greatly for the want of water. When we came within sight of the river the whole Company made an unceremonious rush for it—never did water seem more cool and refreshing. The number of buffaloes seems to increase rather than diminish. The Company fired two volleys at one, which had the temerity to approach to within point-blank range. He limped for a few hundred yards with his grievous load of lead, then quietly lay down and expired. At another time we fired by file at a herd, to drive it from the road.

September 18 (Saturday). We arrived once more at Fort Kearney, having marched nineteen and a quarter miles. Not one buffalo was seen during the whole day, although there was a party detailed to hunt. Their sudden disappearance surprised us considerably, until we learned that the grass throughout the last twenty miles is of a kind that the animal does not relish. We encamped in rear of the Fort, where the water is most convenient. The man who was left here on the march out, Robert Ayres, rejoined the Company, having completely recovered.

September 19 (Sunday). The day was given up to rest, which our weary bodies much needed, as the fatiguing nature of the long marches and the frequent occurrence of our tours of guard duty have drawn very largely upon our physical energies.

September 20 (Monday). We drew rations to-day and made general preparations for our start to-morrow. Darkness brought with it a fiddler from the Fort, a real jovial "culluhed puhson," who was not so much a violinist as a fiddler; who danced "Juba," "Jim Crow," and the "Old Virginia Break-down," and sang all the Negro songs in the catalogue for the edification and amusement of his numerous audience.

September 21 (Tuesday). We traversed twenty-two and three-quarters miles of country, and encamped on the hills above Platte Valley. As we feared the necessity of camping where water could not be found, we nooned on the river before bidding it farewell. Our cooks made preparations for soup, but discovered upon examining the meat that by reason of the warm weather we would

have to forego that refreshment. We filled our water casks before resuming our march, and after a very fatiguing tramp we encamped near a slough, which, together with what water we had brought with us, supplied our necessities for this evening.

September 22 (Wednesday). We reached the Little Blue River, after a march of twenty-seven miles. The route was over the hills which border upon the Little Blue; at the termination of the march we descended into the valley and encamped on the bank of the river. Game has been unusually scarce the past few days, but today a buffalo and some antelopes were seen, although we did not succeed in obtaining any.

September 23 (Thursday). We encamped again on the Little Blue, concluding a march of twenty-four miles. We passed a spot where a new log building had not long since been commenced. Upon entering it a dog was discovered lying on the ground, near some clothing saturated with blood. We endeavored to entice the dog out, but neither threat nor persuasion would induce him to leave his solitary tenement, all we could elicit from him being an inquiring, mournful look which moved the sternest heart to pity. We suspected that the premises had been the scene of foul play, and upon further search a newly made grave was found contiguous to the building. Later we were told that the man who had owned the claim was murdered by a lawless gang of ruffians which infests the neighborhood.

September 24 (Friday). Our odometer registered twenty-three miles. Our camp is near a large elm tree, the only tree to be seen for miles around, wherefore we adopted the name, "Lone Tree Camp." One or two log houses were seen during the day's march, and we derived some comfort from the fact that we are once more getting into an inhabited country.

September 25 (Saturday). We passed several very fine streams in the course of our twenty-three-mile march, but encamped near a nauseous bog from which we were forced to take water for drinking and cooking. We crossed the Big and Little Sandy Creeks, at the latter of which we cut a supply of wood, leaving the sick wagon behind to carry it. At the Big Sandy we saw a very tasty log building, which, together with its grounds, possessed an air of comfort lacking in many farms and houses farther East.

September 26 (Sunday). We continued in camp, an arrangement that accords very well with the dictates of our consciences, which become the more sensitive the nearer we approach to civilization.

At the close of the day we sang some sacred songs—a sort of penance for the many breaches of the Fourth Commandment of which we have been guilty during the march.

September 27 (Monday). We encamped at Cottonwood Creek, after a march of twenty-six and a quarter miles. To-day an arrangement was made which conduces greatly to the comfort of the Company. An order was published to the effect that half of the guard should ride half the length of the march, and the other half of the guard the remainder; also that a third of the Company should ride an hour, then to be relieved by another third, and so on. This assisted very much in saving us from the fatigue of steady marching.

September 28 (Tuesday). We marched twenty-four and a half miles and encamped on Small Creek. We crossed the Big Blue River, by fording, this morning, and halted there an hour for rest and to water the mules. We then passed through Palmetto City, and found that since our march through there, in going out, there have been added several more buildings; the place has, in fact, begun to assume the appearance of a thriving little village. The pleasure of entering a store was furnished us, and we gave the astonished proprietors an unusual run of custom for a few minutes.

September *29* (Wednesday). We marched and rode twenty-eight and a quarter miles, and encamped on Big Nemaha Creek. The march afforded nothing of note, with the exception of a watermelon frolic, which occurred during a rest in front of a store. We were so elated at once more coming within reach of fruit that the proprietor was quickly rid of his stock of melons and cantaloupes.

September 30 (Thursday). We pitched our camp on Muddy Creek, concluding a march of twenty-one miles. As there are several farmhouses in the vicinity of our camp, this evening we had an opportunity to enjoy the luxury of butter, milk, cheese, eggs, etc.—which good fortune contributed not a little toward restoring us to cheerfulness and good humor.

October 1 (Friday). Twenty-six and a half miles were left behind, which brought us to the first branch of Grasshopper Creek, Very many comfortable farms were seen, the grounds covered with thriving crops. We crossed the third and second branches of Grasshopper Creek, and Walnut Creek.

October 2 (Saturday). We pitched our camp below Mount Pleasant, a neat little town about thirteen miles from Fort Leavenworth. The day's march amounted to twenty miles. The road presented

an unusual sight, in that it was nearly all the way enclosed between two fences. When we passed over this road on our march to Utah, scarcely more than a dozen farms were to be seen, and those but lately commenced; now we are astonished to see the country, for about forty miles from Leavenworth, thickly settled with fine, thriving farms, neatly built houses, and waving fields of grain, enclosed by strong, well built fences.

October 3 (Sunday). To-day we arrived at the termination of our march—the goal that has been so anxiously looked for—and in the midst of a general excitement in the meeting of friends, and the hurry and bustle of unpacking the wagons and carrying their contents into our old quarters, we took possession of our rooms, every one laughing and talking together, exceedingly delighted to think our hardships at last concluded. The evening was employed in ridding ourselves of the soil and stains of our long march; the well-worn prairie uniform being speedily cast off, and new articles of clothing, perseveringly husbanded for this occasion, as quickly taking its place.

[End of narrative.]

NOTE: But a few days were spent at Fort Leavenworth before the Company resumed the eastward movement, by boat and train, arriving at West Point on the 12th day of October, 1858.

	Miles.
The Outward March	989
The Return March	1,028½
Extra Marching in Work of Construction	62
Aggregate	2,079½